

Depression among Higher Secondary Arts Students in Relation to Some Demographic Variables: Gender, Locality & Family Type

Abstract

The present study attempts to explore the impact of gender, family type and locality on depression among the students of arts stream studying in higher secondary schools. Sample consists of 120 higher secondary arts' students (age-16+) having mild or moderate level of depression, identified from 10 rural and 10 urban co-education schools of Birbhum district in West Bengal by administering the Beck's Depression Inventory (BDI). The data (mild/moderate level of depression of students) are subjected to differential analysis. A significant gender difference in depression is observed by the study. The depression value of girls is more than that of boys. It is also revealed by the study that rural depressed students scored lower in BDI than urban depressed students and the depressed students of nuclear family scored higher in BDI than the students belonging to joint family and having mild or moderate level of depression. In a nutshell, it is revealed by the present study that gender, locality and family type have some impacts on depression among higher secondary arts students.

Keywords: Depression, Demographic Variables, Higher secondary Arts Students, Higher Secondary Schools

Introduction

Adolescent is a period of stress and strain with rapid physical, emotional, psychological and social changes. If different type of demands are not fulfilled properly in adolescent period then there arise tensions, stress, mental pain which hinder to cope with the environment around one. Lack of experience, egocentricism and curiosity to experiment with new and sometimes risky social roles for establishing a unique identity in the society stimulate the psycho-social problems (Gilmore et al, 1984). High academic expectation of his family to an adolescent can create more stress and posits him in more worsen mental condition. Besides, physical and sexual abuse, teen-age pregnancy, juvenile delinquency, alcoholism, drug dependency, beggary and wandering are some common problems in adolescence (Shanmugam, 1987). These all can generate the causes of wide variety of mood and deviation from activity that can affect the person's thoughts, behaviors, feelings and sense of well being. This mental state is termed as depression. Depression is defined as "A mental condition characterized by feelings of severe despondency and dejection, typically also with feelings of inadequacy and guilt, often accompanied by lack of energy and disturbance of appetite and sleep". *Oxford Dictionary*

Depression may vary among individuals of different areas, different families, different ages and others. Present study has been done in order to examine if there exists any variation of depression in regard to gender, family type and locality.

Operational Definitions of the Demographic Variables

Family Type

In the context of Indian society family type refers the classification of families according to the numbers of generations living in one house and involving in a common relationship. When two or more generations live in the same family involving in a common relationship that family is considered as a joint family. Nuclear family is that family which contains the members of only one generation. In the present research the family type is a demographic variable as it attributes the subjects (samples) in two different sections in order to represent the population.



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Gender

The demographic variable gender is actually the biological sex-male and female, the two different parts of total samples, representing the population in two different categories. .

Locality

It is also a demographic variable bearing two categories namely urban area and rural area. For the present study urban area is considered as that area designating the city or town with a corporation or municipality or town committee or Notified Area. But rural area refers here a geographic area that is situated outside the town or city, under the jurisdiction of Panchayat.

Literature Review

Alketa et al (2005) [5] investigated the relationship between depression and its treatments and the academic performance of undergraduate students. They diagnosed depression was associated with a 0.49 point, or half a letter grade, decrease in student Grade Point Average (GPA), while treatment was associated with a protective effect of approximately 0.44 points. The self-reported data regarding the impact of depression on the performance of academic tasks was consistent with their findings. Depressed students reported a pattern of increasing interference of depression symptoms with academic performance peaking in the month of diagnosis and decreasing thereafter with the lowest levels reported in months 4 through 6 post-diagnosis, each of which is significantly less than the month of diagnosis. They discussed that the finding of a significant relationship between depression and academic performance was robust to the variety of analyses employed within this study.

Cloninger Svrakic and Przybeck (2006) [3] investigated to find out that whether personality assessment can predict future depression. They selected a group of 631 adults, representative of the general population who completed the Temperament and Character Inventory (TCI) and Center for Epidemiological Studies depression scale (CES-D) at baseline and one year later. TCI scores at baseline accounted for gender differences in levels of depression. TCI personality scores were strongly stable (range in $r=.78$ to $.85$ for each of seven dimensions) whereas mood was only moderately stable ($r=.62$) over the twelve-month follow-up.

Black et al (2012) [4] made a study on 531 Australian adolescent living outside the metropolitan area. They used a questionnaire including demographic questions; the Kutcher Adolescent Depression Scale (KADS); and questions regarding individual perceptions of community characteristics. They showed that 18% of the respondents screened positive for depression on the KADS, 41% to be low mood much of the time or more often, and 20% experienced occasional or more frequent self-harm or suicidal thoughts, plans or actions. The authors obtained that depression was related to gender, with more females (23%) screening positive for depression than males (11.8%). They also obtained that there was no correlation of prevalence of depression with

the degree of remoteness or the socioeconomic status.

Bhaskar et al (2013) [2] conducted a cross sectional study on 360 junior college students a rural area in Maharashtra to find the extent and causes of their (students') depression, anxiety and stress. Levels of depression, anxiety and stress in arts, commerce and science students was also compared in the study. Depression Anxiety Stress Scale-42 (DASS) was used for the purpose. The authors showed that students of rural area were vulnerable to depression, anxiety and stress. Arts students had a higher level of depression as compared to the students from science and commerce streams. The authors also reported that depression, anxiety and stress in junior college students were related to academic performance as well as to various internal and external factors.

Another cross sectional study was done by **Ahmad and Mazlan (2014) [1]** on 426 inmates in order to compare the prevalence of stress and depression between men and women inmates, and to determine the association between stress and depression. Data were collected by two self-report surveys. It was revealed from the study that stress and depression were significantly higher in female inmates than in male inmates.

Chapman Barna and Axelrad (2015) [8] carried out a case study on treatment of preschool depression with parent management training with view to demonstrate that a brief parent management training (PMT) intervention can be an effective treatment for preschool symptoms of depression, both in terms of reducing negative child affect and increasing positive emotional coping, as well as in reducing the disruptive behaviors that commonly present in conjunction with internalizing symptoms.

Kumar and Baliya (2016) [6] designed a study to find the significant differences in mental health among college level students. They used descriptive cum survey method of research and followed multi stage random sampling for collection of 1000 students in equal number of boys and girls. They reported that there was no significant difference in mental health among college level students with respect to their gender, locality and religion.

Another study was conducted by **Naik and Padikkal (2016) [7]** on 171 college students to focus on depression and its relationship with the demographic variables such as gender (male and female), course of study (science and arts) and locality (urban and rural) among college students. Beck Depression Inventory was used for their study. Their study revealed the significant difference on depression between science and arts college students and between rural and urban college students where as no significant gender difference on depression was found.

Objectives of the Study

1. To measure the depression of higher secondary arts students
2. To examine the impact of gender on depression among higher secondary arts students

- To examine the impact of locality on depression among higher secondary arts students
- To examine the impact of family type on depression among higher secondary arts students

Null Hypotheses

- No significant difference exists between higher secondary boy and girl students in respect of their mild/moderate level of depression
- No significant difference exists between higher secondary Urban and Rural Students in respect of their mild/moderate level of depression
- No significant difference exists between higher secondary arts students belonging to Nuclear and Joint family, in respect of their mild/moderate level of depression

Variables

- Gender
- Locality
- Family Type
- Depression

Methodology

This study is mainly empirical in nature.

Research Method

The research method is Descriptive Method inserted with Survey Technique

Sample

A sample of 120 students in equal numbers of boys, having mild/moderate level of depression, of class XI (Arts Stream) is selected from ten urban and ten rural co-education schools (West Bengal Council of Higher Secondary Education) of Birbhum district in West Bengal.

	Boys	Girls	Total
Rural	30	30	60
Urban	30	30	60
Total	60	60	120

Tool Used

Beck's Depression Inventory for measuring the depression of the students has been used to achieve the objectives of the research.

Beck's Depression Inventory (BDI, 1961,) consists of 21 questions about how the subject has been feeling in the last week. Each question has a set of at least four possible answer choices, ranging in intensity with a scale value of 0—3. The total score, obtained by summing up all the scores for each answer, is compared to a key to determine the severity of depression. The standard cut-offs are given below.

0–9: indicates minimal depression; 10–18: indicates mild depression; 19–29: indicates moderate depression; 30–63: indicates severe depression

Procedure:

At first, 10 rural as well as 10 urban Higher Secondary (H.S) schools are selected by the method of stratified random sampling. Beck's Depression Inventory is administered on the H.S. students of arts stream from each school and then students are identified as depressed who have mild or moderate level of depression. Next, 60 boy students (30 rural and 30 urban) and 60 girl students (30 rural and 30 urban) are randomly taken from the selected students

having mild and moderate level of depression. Thus, four groups namely, Boy students, Girl students, Rural Students and Urban Students are formed. Thus, each group consisted of 60 depressed students belonging to Arts Stream.

Statistical Techniques Used

The study follows inferential statistics. To test the null hypotheses H_{01} to H_{03} , F-test ($2 \times 2 \times 2$ ANOVA) is adopted and then t-tests are followed where F-values are found to be significant at .05 or lesser level.

Results and Discussion

Table-1: Presentation of df, Sums of Squares (SS), Mean Squares (MS) and F-Values by three ways ANOVA for Scores in Depression

Source of Variance	df	SS	MS	F
Due to Gender	1	310.408	310.408	16.987*
Due to Family	1	195.075	195.075	10.675*
Due to Locality	1	468.075	468.075	25.615*
Error	112	2046.667	18.274	

*Significant at .01 level

Since the F-values are significant in respect of Gender, Family Type and Locality t-tests have been adopted to test whether there exists any difference in Depression with respect to Gender, Family Type and Locality.

Table 2: Presentation of t- Values along with Other Relevant Measures for Gender-wise difference in Depression

Group	N	Mea	SD	SE _D	t
Boys	60	19.52	5.203	.878	3.664*
Girls		22.73	4.380		

Significant at .01 level

Table-2 reveals that t-value 3.664 is statistically significant at .01 level thereby rejecting the null hypothesis (1). It implies that there exists a significant difference between higher secondary boy and girl students in respect of their mild/moderate level of depression. From the mean values in the table it is inferred that girl students have higher depression than their counterparts.

The possible causes of the above finding may be that in Indian context, the girls have less scope than boys to spend more time outside their homes and interact more with peoples. Besides, research reports that girls' anxiety, anxiousness, tension are higher than those of boys. These may leads the girl students to be depressed more than boy students.

Table 3: Presentation of t- Values along with Other Relevant Measures for Locality-wise difference in Depression

Groups	N	Mean	SD	SE _D	t
Rural	60	19.15	4.58	.852	4.635*
Urban		23.10	4.76		

Significant at .01 level

Table-3 depicts that t-value 4.635 is statistically significant at .01 level thereby rejecting the null hypothesis (2). It implies that there exists a significant difference between higher secondary urban and rural students in respect of their mild/moderate level of depression. From the mean values in the table it is inferred that urban students are more depressed than rural students.

Urban life is full of tensions and pressures. Modernization affects urban life more than rural life. Race of competition in urban area is more than rural area. Therefore, urban students have to confront many psychological problems in comparison to rural students. Besides, rate of drug addiction is higher in urban area than in rural because of its availability and impact of modernization. Hence, it is natural to obtain the above finding that the rural students have less depression than urban students.

Table 4: Presentation of t-Values along with Other Relevant Measures for Type wise Difference in Depression

Groups	N	Mean	SD	SE _D	t
Nuclear	60	22.40	5.11	.896	2.885*
Joint		16.85	4.70		

*Significant at .01 level

Table-4 reflects that t-value 2.885 is statistically significant at .01 level thereby rejecting the null hypothesis (3). It implies that there exists a significant difference between higher secondary students belonging to nuclear families and those belong to joint families in respect of their mild/moderate level of depression. From the mean values in the table it is inferred that depressed students of nuclear families scored higher than those of joint families.

Many family members are included in joint family. So, the student belonging to joint family has more interactions with his/her family members. He/she can share his/her problems with them in a greater friendly environment. Besides, he/she can get valuable guidance as well as mental supports from them. But, in nuclear family the adolescent gets lower scope to be adhered and to interact with his/her family members. Therefore, in nuclear families, sometimes the adolescent is not able to rid of those serious problems which he/she faces, and thus becomes depressed.

Summary and Conclusion

The study is carried out to compare depression among higher secondary Arts' students in respect of gender, family type and locality. 120 higher secondary depressed students of arts streams are identified from 10 rural and urban schools of Birbhum district, West Bengal. Beck's Depression Inventory (BDI) is used to collect the depression data. The brief results of the study are mentioned below.

1. Girl students scored significantly higher in BDI than boy students
2. Rural depressed students scored lower than urban depressed students

3. Depression scores of students belonging to nuclear families are higher than those of students belonging to joint families.

Now a day, depression is a widespread problem. Family and school have a great responsibility to deal with the problem have to spend more time with their wards and have to discuss frankly their problems with them. School should arrange counseling session for the student in mental distress. The bad effect of modernization should be discussed with adolescent students by parents and teachers. Especially for urban students, physical exercises and playing should be encouraged. It attempts are not taken early, it is apprehended that depression will pervade the adolescent society in bad ways.

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